

“Let’s enhance long term care for our seniors. I will propose comprehensive reforms of our long term care system.

“These efforts will provide the services that help the elderly stay in their own homes – where they’ve lived their lives, raised their children and built their memories. And, for those that need a more intensive level of care, we will promote a variety of options – from assisted living to state-of-the-art nursing homes.

“While Medicaid has played an important role in our achievements, we are now faced with a Medicaid problem that is quickly outstripping our ability to afford it.

“Clearly, we need to improve the Medicaid system. We must start by providing our growing population of aging citizens with the quality healthcare they need while preserving the system for their children and grandchildren.

“And we must address Medicaid costs borne by local governments. Senator Bruno has already identified this as an important issue. Senator, I commend your initiative. Let’s work together to reduce state and local Medicaid expenses this year and begin to reverse the costs that have squeezed the finances of so many county governments.”

*Excerpt from Governor George Pataki’s State of the State Address, January 7, 2004*